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Capital Bulletin

Dateline

Washing

The scandals that could blow the Kennedy Administration out of the water are being given the Alphonse-Ga treatment by a sleeping Republican Party. The first come Bobby Baker, until very recently the Secretary of the majority in the Senate. Mr. Baker has been forced to go under pressure from Senator John J. Williams (R., Del.) took the view that prior association with Vice President Lyndon B. Johnson did not give a congressional employee license to poach in the public domain.

Mr. Baker's story is an interesting one. Starting out with nothing but the goodwill of the Democratic majority, whom he ran errands and gathered political intelligence, he parlayed his native talents into a neat \$3.5 million. He is accused in federal court of having received \$100,000 in fees from vending machine companies and \$100,000 from contractors doing defense work. But this was not enough, and Mr. Baker branched out on his own. He set up a rival vending machine corporation which (to the surprise, surprise) began to monopolize this very lucrative business.

What has appalled the senators who looked at the Baker case is its ramifications. For there is more to it than vending machines or the judicious use of influence. This story cannot be told until it has spilled the oil of privilege—but no one in the House or Senate is willing to spill. In fact, the Republican minority sat tight after another leading Democratic senator after another expressed

Wito Otepka was a key figure in the inquiry leading to these conclusions. As Chief of the Evaluations Division of the State Department's security office, Otepka had delivered an adverse report on Wieland's "suitability and integrity." Otepka told the senators: "I felt and I specified each instance, that I thought there were questions, serious questions of the man's integrity, and I felt that such questions, since they . . . did not relate to the issue as to whether or not he was disloyal . . . should be reviewed and adjudicated under the Foreign Service regulations of the Department of State."

Despite these recommendations, nothing in particular was done about Wieland's security clearance until the subject was raised at President Kennedy's press conference, January 24, 1962. Kennedy stammered an indistinct approbation of Wieland's continued employment, and the following day a State Department memo was dispatched indicating Wieland was to be regarded as free and clear of security shortcomings. Otepka commented: "I don't think I can defend the Department in its course."

Otepka also alleged that men of "questionable background" held positions in the State Department's security clearances were being used in sensitive positions. Department higher-ups denied Otepka's testimony, accused him of "maliciousness." The New Frontiersmen claimed not to know anything about specific cases mentioned in Otepka's presentation to the Subcommittee.

Otepka was subsequently recalled and asked to substantiate his statements. He did so, producing documents corroborating his previous testimony, chapter and verse. These papers carried notes and initials by the same New Frontiersmen who claimed never to have laid eyes on them. Otepka's rebuttal, according to Subcommittee members, was "iron-clad."

Caught dead to rights, the Kennedy officials assumed a new tack. They could not now charge Otepka with lying—

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